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No. 27

To his Grace, His Majesties High Commissioner, and to the Right Honourable the Estates of Parliament.

22. May. 1690.

The Humble Address of the PRESBYTERIAN Ministers, and Professors of the Church of SCOTLAND.

Sheweth,

THat as we cannot but acknowledge and adore the holy and righteous Dispensation of the Lord, in all the great and long continued Afflictions wherewith he hath afflicted us for our Sins; so we are not a little filled with Admiration at the great and wonderful Providence of our most Gracious God, who alone doth great wonders, for his mercy endureth for ever; That at such a time, when our strength was gone, and there was none to deliver, He mercifully stirred up that pious and magnanimous prince WILLIAM, then prince of ORANGE, now, by the good Hand of God, our Gracious Sovereign, to Espouse the Interest of the protestant Religion, and of the afflicted Ministers and professors thereof in these Kingdoms, and hath blessed Him in so Heroick and Noble Undertaking with agreeable Success: As also, hath raised up your Lordships, our most Noble and Honourable patriots, to join heartily with His Majesty, in appearing zealously for securing of the protestant Religion in this Kingdom, and for what may tend to the better Establishment thereof in all its Concerns; And in evidencing your just Indignation against the Corruptions of Church and State, in your Lordships Claim of Right: And particularly, by freeing us of the Yoke of prelacy, and of the undue power and Ecclesiastical Supremacy in Church matters, formerly established in the Supreme Magistrat. And as these your Lordships zealous beginnings of appearing for the Interest of the protestant Religion, and professors thereof, have been, and are great matter of joy to our Hearts, and of blessing and magnifying our Lord and Master in your Lordships behalf; So they are a Door of Hope to us, and to all that love the true Reformed protestant Religion in this Land; That his Grace, His Majesties High Commissioner, and this Honourable Court of parliament, will, in your station, go on zealously in your begun Work of purging this poor oppressed Church from all Corruptions brought into it, by ambitious and covetous Churchmen, who sought their own things, but not the things of Jesus Christ; and from all the sad Consequences which have followed upon the Erecting of prelacy; such as were, the driving several hundreds of Ministers, all at one time, out of their Churches, without either Accusation or Citation, and the filling of their places with ignorant and scandalous persons, (which His Majesty is graciously pleased to notice in His Declaration for Scotland, as an occasion of all this poor Churches miseries, and from which insupportable Sufferings, He declared His Resolution to relieve and rescue us.) And we may add, with many also erroneous and unsound in the Faith, Enemies to the Reformation, and who have now appeared disaffected to the present Civil Government; As also the framing of a numerous Train of severe Laws, severely executed both on Ministers and people of all Degrees, so far, that even while we were counted and treated as sheep for the slaughter, we might not petition nor complain, without rendering our selves highly Criminal by the Laws and Acts then made. All which, we hope, the Commissioner his Grace, and your Lordships in this present parliament, will take to your serious Consideration, and will free this poor oppressed Church from such Oppressors and Oppressions, and settle it again upon the right Foundations of Government and Discipline, agreeable to the Word of God, and established in this Church by Law, near an hundred years ago. Which settlement, we are confident, will prove the best Remedy of all the otherways incurable Distractions, and the mean of quieting and uniting the whole Country, in a joint and firm opposition against all His Majesties, and your Lordships Enemies.

We therefore, His Majesties most Loyal Subjects, and your Lordships most humble and dutiful Servants in Christ, Humbly beseech, The Commissioner his Grace, and the Honourable Estates of Parliament, Seeing the King's Majesty hath Declared, and your Lordships with him, have Zealously Appeared for the Protestant Religion, You would be Graciously pleased, by your Civil Sanction, to Establish and Ratifie the late Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, (which contain the Sum and Substance of the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches) The Directory of Worship, and Presbyterial Church-Government and Discipline, all agreeable to the Word of GOD, and formerly Received by the General Consent of this Nation. And seeing Prelacy, and all who have entered under Prelacy, have been Imposed upon the Church, without her Consent, in any of her Free General Assemblies, and that Presbyterial Government, cannot be Secure in the Hands of them, who are of contrary Principles; Therefore we humbly Petition, That the Church Government may be Established in the Hands of of such only, who, by their former Carriage, and Sufferings, have evidenced, that they are known sound Presbyterians, and well affected to His Majesty's Government; or who, hereafter shall be found to be such, (which we are hopefull, by the Grace of God, shall be managed with such Christian Prudence, Moderation and Tenderness, as shall leave no Just Matter of Complaint to any.) And that not only these Ministers yet alive, who were unjustly thrust from their Churches, may be Restored thereto, and these Parishes and Flocks, at that time, no less violently Imposed upon, may be freed from Intruders; But also, all other Presbyterian Ministers, who either are already, or may be, by respective Flocks orderly called hereafter, may have Access to be settled in Churches, after the Presbyterian way, as they shall be Ecclesiastically Approved and Appointed, and may have your Lordships Civil Sanction added thereunto.

And

And we also Request, that the Church thus Established, may be allowed by your Lordships Civil Sanction, to Appoint Visitations for Purging out Insufficient, Negligent, Scandalous, and Erroneous Ministers. And seeing Patronages, which had their Rise in the most Corrupt and Latter Times of Antichristianism, have always been a great Grievance to this Church, as the Source and Fountain of a Corrupt Ministry, That they may be Abolished; And that the Church may be Established upon its former Good Foundations, Confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, *since the Year One Thousand Five Hundred and Sixty. And that all* Acts *contrair to this Government that Ratifie Ceremonies, and Impose Punishments on Presbyterians, for Non-conformity, and for Worshipping GOD according to their Principles, may be Abrogate. And as a good and necessary Mean, for preserving the Purity of the Church, your Lordships take Care, that Learned, Sound, and Godly Men be put in Universities, and Seminaries of Learning. Humbly submitting to your Lordships Wisdom, the Method of Considering, and Effectuating these our desires.) Thus all things being done for the House of the God of Heaven, according to the Commandment of the God of Heaven, by your Lordships pious and wise managing these Affairs of the Church of Christ, This poor long oppressed and tossed Church, may at length, through God's Blessing, Arrive at a safe and quiet Harbour, And the True Honour and Happiness of His Majesty, and your Lordships, as the signal Nursing Fathers of the Church of Christ in this Land, may be advanced, and continued to future Generations; And so the Blessing of the Church that was ready to perish, may remain still upon His Majesty, and your Lordships.*

And your Lordships Petitioners shall ever pray, that God may bless and protect the Persons of Their *Majesties, KING WILLIAM* and *QUEEN MARY*, long to Rule, and Govern this Nation, and your Lordships under them.

AN ACT,

Restoring the Presbyterian *Ministers who were Thrust from their Churches since the first of* January, 1661.

Edinburgh, the Twenty fifth day of *April* 1690 Years.

FOrasmuch as by an Act of this present Parliament, relative to, and in prosecution of the *Claim of Right*, Prelacy and the Superiority of Church Officers above Presbyters, is Abolished, and that many Ministers of the Presbyterian perswasion, since the first of *January* One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty One, have been deprived of their Churches, or Banished for not conforming to Prelacy, and not complying with the Courses of the time; Therefore Their Majesties, with Advice and Consent of the Estates of Parliament, Ordain and Appoint, That all those Presbyterian Ministers yet alive, who were thrust from their Charges, since the first Day of *January* One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty One, or Banished for not conforming to Prelacy, and not complying with the Courses of the time, have forthwith free Access to their Churches, that they may presently exercise the Ministry in these Paroches, without any new Call thereto, and allows them to bruik and enjoy the Benefices and Stipends thereunto belonging, and that for the whole Cropt One Thousand Six Hundred Eighty and Nine, and immediatly to enter to the Churches and Manses, where the Churches are Vacant: and where they are not Vacant, then their entry thereto is Declared to be to the half of the Benefice and Stipend, due and payable at *Michalmass* last, for the half Year immediatly preceeding betwixt *Whitsunday* and *Michalmass*; Declaring that the present Incumbent shall have right to the other half of the Stipend and Benefice, payable for the *Whitsunday* last by past; And to the effect that these Ministers may meet with no stop or hinderance in entring immediatly to their Charges, the present Incumbents in such Churches, are hereby Appointed upon Intimation hereof, to desist from their Ministry in these Paroches, and to remove themselves from the Manses and Gleibs thereunto belonging, betwixt and *Whitsunday* next to come, that the Presbyterian Ministers formerly put out, may enter peaceably thereto; and Appoints the Privy Council to see this Act put to Execution. *Extracted forth of the Records of Parliament, by me*

J. Hay, *Cls. Reg.*

God Save King WILLIAM *and Queen* MARY.

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